FBIS DAILY REPORT

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ATOMIC ENERGY CHIEF DISCUSSES ATOCHA II BID SCHEDULE

PY230009 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 2115 GMT 22 Mar 79 PY

[Excerpts] Buenos Aires, 22 Mar (LATIN)--The head of the National Atomic Energy Commission (CNEA), Rear Adm Carlos Castro Madero, has stated that Argentina is faced with a lack of confidence by the nuclear powers regarding its goal of autonomy in this sector, something we consider discriminatory. I hope the United States will have no objections to Argentina's obtaining the nuclear technology to which it has a legitimate right, he added severely while standing in front of a large flag of the organization he has headed since 1976.

This lack of confidence arises from resistance to giving Argentina access to heavy water technology which it needs for its reactors after it opted for the use of natural uranium in its nuclear power plants, Castro Madero stated. If Argentina obtains securely all the technology needed, it would consider technically granting those safeguards, Castro Madero said.

Castro Madero explained to LATIN in the CNEA Situation Room that Argentina will receive bids up to 2 April for the construction of Atocha II, and that the list of possible bids has been reduced. The plant must begin operating between June and September 1987. The nuclear aspect in itself is limited to the Kraftwerke Union enterprise of the FRG and the Atomic Energy Company Ltd of Canada. The FRG firm supplied Argentina's first reactor and the Canadian firm is building the second.

The bids, which are to be opened next month, provide for the supply of the reactor, the basis for producing heavy water, the transfer of technology and the conventional civil engineering aspects of the plant.

Castro Madero also indicated that the Canadian firm needs to complement its proposal with the service of another enterprise, and it proposes to choose between General Electric of Great Britain and the Italian firm of NIRA, which is a member of the state group IRI, while Argentina proposed Kraftwerke Union.

Castro Madero reported that the technical bids will be opened on 3 April and the financial bids a few weeks later. They will be submitted to the government in June and a decision is expected at the beginning of August. The official explained that the final decision rests with the executive branch based on CNEA recommendations. This decision can take into account other factors of relations with the bidding country, such as the balance of payments, financial relations and others, together with the technical recommendations of CNEA, Castro Madero stated.

He pointed out, regarding international pressure over total guarantees, that the requests can be acceptable if the total transfer of technology Argentina needs is guaranteed.

LABOR MINISTRY WARNS CNT AGAINST PLANNED MEETING

PY221327 Paris AFP in Spanish 0343 GMT 22 Mar 79 PY

[Excerpts] Buenos Aires, 21 Mar (AFP)--A spokesman for the Labor Ministry stated here tonight that the cancellation of the meeting between Gen Llamil Reston with the National Labor Commission [CNT], scheduled for today, will not prevent a continuation of dialog with union leaders.

The spokesman added that the minister could not accept conditions virtually imposed by union leaders through prior publication of the issues they were to discuss. He also stated that the CNT leaders, who scheduled the holding of a national congress for the end of the month, would suffer the consequences if they persisted with their idea.

The spokesman specified that this convocation, of obvious political connotation, violated a decree that limits union activities (as well as political ones) issued by the military junta governing Argentina since 24 March 1976.

He explained that so far flexibility in the norms prohibiting union activities had been permitted, since leaders should take care of their duties.

"However," he said, "the CNT leaders overstepped their bounds when they made a broad public announcement of the plenary meeting."

The official reaction released early this morning did not elicit any response from the CNT. At the end of a meeting held this afternoon, some of the CNT members, merely expressed the opinion that the decision of the Labor Ministry was hasty.

The Labor Ministry spokesman acknowledged that the government made a mistake in allowing a public meeting of businessmen, but emphasized that these meetings were not as spectacular as the one called by the CNT.

LA MATANZA METAL WORKERS STRIKE OVER WITHHELD PAY

PY230154 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2355 GMT 22 Mar 79 PY

[Text] Buenos Aires, 22 Mar (NA)--The Santa Rosa metallurgy enterprise of La Matanza, one of the most important industrial complexes in Buenos Aires Province, with 4,000 workers, is paralyzed due to a labor conflict. According to union sources, the workers began the strike after receiving their paychecks and realizing that the enterprise had not increased their salaries in accordance with the agreement reached with a personnel commission. It was learned that the Labor Ministry has been notified of the situation and has allegedly called for a conciliation meeting.

Union sources reported that the salary negotiations reportedly began 15 days ago with the exclusive participation of internal delegates, since the enterprise did not want to meet with union representatives. During the negotiations, the enterprise reportedly promised a salary increase, which was agreed upon without specifying the amount, but yesterday the workers reacted and went on strike.

Renault Situation Worse

PY221758 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 1450 GMT 22 Mar 79 PY

[Excerpt] Cordoba, 22 Mar (LATIN)--The conflict at the Renault auto plants here worsened today when the company dismissed 70 of the thousands of workers who have been on a sitdown strike since Friday demanding better salaries.

The stoppage, which involves more than 4,000 workers of the central plant and two other factories producing spare parts, was a topic of discussion at a meeting yesterday between President Jorge Rafael Videla and Labor Minister Llamil Reston.

According to company sources, the workers want a 50-percent increase and state that they do not recognize the company's warning to curtail their activities.

Meanwhile, the president of the Renault Company in France, Bernard Vernier Palliez, stated in Buenos Aires that the company will invest $100 million in a 5-year plan to modernize production in its Argentine branch factory. Vernier made this statement at a press conference at the end of a meeting with Economy Minister Jose Martinez de Hoz.

A report released today by union leaders demands urgent changes in the government's economic policy. This policy, if not changed, will have unfortunate results for the workers, the statement said.

MARTINEZ SACKS AGRICULTURE SECRETARY OVER POLICY

FY221340 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1206 GMT 22 Mar 79 FY

[Excerpt] Buenos Aires, 22 Mar (NA)--Jorge Zorreguieta has been appointed new agriculture and livestock secretary. He replaces Mario Cadenas Madariaga, who was asked to submit his resignation by Economy Minister Martinez de Hoz because of his proposals for changes in the official economic policy.

Cadenas Madariaga's resignation follows that of Raymundo Podesta, industrial development secretary, and is part of a reorganization plan for the economy team headed by Martinez de Hoz. This reorganization will probably end with the appointment of Gen Eduardo Corrado, presently leading the National Telecommunications Enterprise (ENTEL), as secretary of the now-vacant Communications Secretariat.

Martinez de Hoz yesterday asked Cadenas Madariaga to submit his resignation without giving any reason for his request, according to Cadenas Madariaga himself. In a press conference he held at the request of journalists covering the Agriculture and Livestock Secretariat, Cadenas Madariaga said: "It is a prerogative of the minister." Also present at the conference was Zorreguieta.

The former secretary said he will return to private life and said he was being replaced by "a friend." Zorreguieta was agriculture under secretary during Cadenas Madariaga's tenure. Although there is still no official confirmation, Zorreguieta may be sowrn in by Martinez de Hoz in a ceremony tomorrow.

BRIEFS

MIKI DEPARTURE--Takeo Miki, former prime minister of Japan, left today for home after a short visit to Argentina during which he met with President Jorge Rafael Videla and Economy Minister Jose Alfredo Martinez de Hoz. Before leaving Ezeiza international airport, Miki emphasized the excellent relations between the two countries. [Buenos Aires Domestic Service in Spanish 1030 GMT 21 Mar 79 FY]

OIL EXPLORATION GETS HIGH PRIORITY DUE TO SHORTAGES

PY221454 La Paz Radio Panamericana Network in Spanish 1130 GMT 22 Mar 79 PY

[Text] The military junta government is giving priority to the prospecting and exploration by Bolivian Government Oil Deposits [YPFB], aimed at increasing production for the domestic market and for exports. This was reported by Planning and Coordination Minister Gary Prado in connection with the critical situation facing the state petroleum enterprise.

The minister said YPFB, the Mining Corporation of Bolivia [COMIBOL] and the Bolivian Development Corporation [CBF] are having problems because of the credits they have obtained in the last few years, which have caused a lack of liquidity. Gary Prado said corrective measures are being taken in the enterprises to reduce their deficits, mainly by (?reducing) projects which cannot be developed immediately because of the present situation of the country.

Nevertheless, the situation is difficult, he added, and this is why the military junta government supports the YPFB prospecting and exploration work and certain corrective measures in the other state enterprises.

BENI DEPARTMENT DECLARED NATIONAL DISASTER AREA

PY222110 La Paz Radio Panamericana Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 22 Mar 79 PY

[Text] After declaring a state of emergency throughout Beni Department, regional officials have also declared it a national disaster area and asked for help from the government to overcome the serious damage caused by the latest rains. The Radio Panamericana correspondent in Trinidad city makes the following report:

[Begin recording] This is Radio Panamericana reporting from Trinidad: (?The prefect) of Beni Department yesterday morning declared the entire department in a state of emergency. Later, in the afternoon, the members of the Beni emergency committee declared Beni Department a national disaster area because the settlements and [words indistinct] of peasants and farmers located near the River Mamore, (Sodare), Isiboro, Yacuma, Tijamuchi, Rapulo, (Umacino) and [name indistinct] have been totally destroyed by the floods.

At the same time the region's main industry, cattlebreeding, is seriously endangered. Cattle are lacking pasture, since land which used to be covered with grass is now a picture of desolation where only water and mud are seen. Under these distressing circumstances, the (?Red Cross) director and an adviser from the U.S. State Department have promised their cooperation. [end recording]

According to this report, the peasants have suffered most of the damage, and the agrarian zones in the region are scenes of desolation. The report says cooperation has been requested from the entire country. [begin recording] The peasant Federation headed by (Jesus Pablo Ruiz) and the departmental representatives of the Agriculture, Livestock and Peasant Affairs Ministry have asked the ministry to help with seeds for crops produced in the region, as well as technical aid to peasants affected by the floods. We repeat: Yesterday at 1600 Beni Department was declared a national disaster area. Radio Panamericana, Trinidad. [end recording]

MONDALE ARRIVES, MEETS WITH FIGUEIREDO, SARAIVA

PY230046 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2200 GMT 22 Mar 79 PY

[Excerpts] President Figueiredo met this afternoon with U.S. Vice President Walter Mondale, who is visiting our country. Vice President Mondale arrived at Planalto Palace at 1535 and was met by Presidential Protocol Chief Jorge Carlos Ribeiro, who ushered him into the president's office where President Figueiredo and Foreign Minister Saraiva Guerreiro were waiting for him. Subjects of interest to the two countries were discussed at the meeting.

Coinciding with the visit of Vice President Mondale, the Planalto Palace press office released the texts of letters exchanged by Presidents Figueiredo and Carter. The letter from the U.S. President to his Brazilian counterpart was hand-carried by Mrs Joan Mondale on the occasion of President Figueiredo's inauguration.

Paper on Implications of Visit

PY222240 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 22 Mar 79 p 7 PY

[By Laura Fonseca]

[Text] The diplomatic treatment the Brazilian Government gives U.S. Vice President Walter Mondale and the tone of the talks between representatives of the two countries will make it possible to evaluate the present status of U.S.-Brazilian relations. But there is hope at the outset that the situation has reached a point of unreserved rapprochement, leaving behind pr[illegible]sagreements.

The initiative of the U.S. Government in sending a high-ranking representative to Brazil only a week after the inauguration of the new government is, however, a diplomatic disadvantage, mainly because the new officials have had no time to take full command of their responsibilities. In addition, there was no time either to prepare agendas or reports to serve as bases for talks. Nevertheless, this lack of preparation on both sides can have its consequences; either lack of preparation is overcome by the natural cordiality of the parties, thus opening the way for good understanding, or the parties can feel bound by procedural details to the point that the visit may turn out to be useless.

Itamaraty did not want to comment on the possibility that the U.S. Government may have wanted to send Vice President Mondale to talk with President Figueiredo before FRG Chancellor Helmut Schmidt comes to Brazil on 3 April. A diplomat commented: "We do not know if Carter's decision was a deliberate one or not. Nevertheless, Brazil stands to gain through this visit because the more friends we have, the less dependent we will be on any one friend in particular.

As of last night, when Mondale and his delegation arrived, Itamaraty and the U.S. Embassy clearly indicated that there was interest, even determination, in improving the political climate between the two governments. The contacts to be made by the U.S. vice president today can represent a step forward in the normalization of relations. Since Jimmy Carter's visit to Brazil in March 1978, this is the first time a similar circumstance has presented itself. During the period of almost a year, the two countries have simply "agreed to disagree." Mondale's sojourn in Brasilia will show if the two sides have changed sufficiently to let bygones be bygones. Diplomatic sources have pointed out that during this period many things have happened on the international scene.

For instance, U.S. policy on human rights has lessened its strident and dictatorial tone to a whisper. At the same time, and despite current shortcomings, Brazil's situation has clearly improved over that of January 1977 when Carter took over the U.S. administration. The conjunction of these facts reduces to almost nothing any U.S.-Brazilian disagreement on the human rights issue.

As far as the nuclear question, the United States now understands that its concern was premature. If Brazil was facing so many difficulties in the construction of the Angra 1 and 2 plants, with timetables behind schedule, why worry about reprocessing and enriching plants, which will only be a reality in the nineties? Who knows what kind of technological advances will be made by then?

Everything indicates that human rights and the nuclear issue will not be important topics of conversation between Figueiredo and Mondale or between their aides. Mondale himself should remember the cold treatment received from Chancellor Schmidt in mid-1977 when he went to the FRG to discuss the Brazilian-FRG nuclear agreement with the FRG Government as an envoy of President Carter.

U.S. sources have pointed out that Mondale's visit is above all a goodwill gesture and a demonstration of support for the new Brazilian Government, taking advantage of the current good phase in economic relations. In 1978, for instance, the two countries traded $2.9 billion worth of goods both ways, resulting in a balance. The problems with Brazilian export subsidies and with U.S. import taxes, which for some time hindered the entry of Brazilian goods into the U.S. market, have already been worked out in multilateral negotiations within GATT. So everything indicates that these problems will find a natural solution.

At the international level, where Brazil wants to assert itself, mostly regarding Latin American and African countries, the United States recognizes that Brazil can act in a way beneficial to international stability by taking a moderate and constructive position. In the Group of 77, for instance, the United States contends that Brazil's natural leadership has helped to better coordinate the positions of industrialized and underdeveloped countries.

There is no doubt that Brazil and the United States have many opportunities to cooperate both at the bilateral and international levels. This cooperation will be based on a premise the Geisel government made quite clear: Brazil is willing to cooperate, trade and act at bilateral or multilateral levels without giving up its independence and its national interests. If the United States is ready to accept this premise, the period of disagreements can be forgotten.

Saraiva on Visit

PY222052 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 22 Mar 79 p 7 PY

[Excerpt] Brasilia--Foreign Minister Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro said yesterday that he does not believe U.S. Vice President Walter Mondale, who arrived in Brasilia last night, will try to press the Brazilian Government in view of the visit that FRG Chancellor Helmut Schmidt will make to Brazil early in April. He said: "I cannot attribute that kind of motivation to the U.S. Government, nor do I believe that human rights and nuclear policy will be major issues in the talks Mondale will hold with President Figueiredo and in his contacts with Itamaraty."

The foreign minister regards Mondale's visit as a sign of friendship on the part of the Carter administration toward the new Brazilian Government, since it reflects concern over the fact that the vice president could not attend the inauguration ceremony. He said: "This trip is obviously designed to reflect the U.S. Government's determination to honor Brazil, and, consequently, we will receive him very well.

Saraiva Guerreiro also said the Brazilian Government will in no way object to Mondale's having contacts with both opposition and ARENA [National Renewal Alliance] senators and deputies. Itamaraty spokesman Bernardo Pericas Neto has reported that Mondale will, in fact, make these contacts. He noted that Mondale himself expressed interest in talking privately and separately, with both ARENA and MDB [Brazilian Democratic Movement] leaders this morning during his visit to Congress.

Pericas made it clear that these contacts are not included in the vice president's official agenda because they will be informal contacts which are in no way related to the schedule prepared by the Brazilian Government.

The Itamarty spokesman regards Mondale's visit as a political event, which means that no specific issues are included in the talks he will hold with President Figueiredo and Foreign Minister Saraiva Guerreiro. Pericas said: "Since this is not a visit of a technical nature, it is anticipated that the talks will include general issues concerning bilateral relations and major issues concerning international politics."

In this respect, Foreign Minister Saraiva Guerreiro himself stated that the Mondale visit is different from that which Helmut Schmidt will make to Brazil, since the latter trip had already been decided upon a few months ago, and therefore it can be better prepared for by setting up a more complete program of issues to be discussed. He said: "I do not mean that one trip will be more important than the other, but simply that they will be events of a different nature, and Brazil will welcome both Mondale and Schmidt."

TEMPORARY AGREEMENT REACHED IN SAO PAULO STEEL STRIKE

PY222256 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 2055 GMT 22 Mar 79 PY

[Text] Sao Paulo, 22 Mar (LATIN)--Labor sources report that union representatives reached an agreement in principle with business leaders today to put an end to the steel workers strike that has paralyzed the Sao Paulo industrial complex of the automobile industry, until complementary negotiations on salary demands are carried out. The temporary agreement was reached during negotiations here between three unions representing more than 150,000 metallurgy workers, management and Labor Minister Murilo Macedo, who arrived from Brasilia last night to mediate in the critical dispute. The sources indicated that the unions agreed to observe a 45-day truce before restarting negotiations on salary increases.

The union representatives had previously rejected a gradual increase of 63 percent offered by the Sao Paulo State Federation of Industries [FIESP], unless the increase of 11 percent received through strikes last year was included. The agreement reached today established that the strikers will not be paid for the days they were on strike, and the salary reductions will be made gradually beginning with the May salary. The sources indicated that the strikers will not suffer any other penalties.

The union representatives will submit the proposal to the workers during a meeting. They will vote to accept or reject the guidelines of the agreement. Labor sources could not say when the strikers will return to work.

Strike To Continue

PY230231 Porto Alegre Radio Guaiba in Portuguese 0200 GMT 23 Mar 79 PY

[Text] The 80,000 metalworkers of Sao Bernardo do Campo and Diadema unanimously decided to carry on the strike they started 9 days ago, until a new proposed agreement with the employers is again voted on. A similar decision was made by the metalworkers of Sao Caetano and Santo Andre.

The proposed agreement rejected by the ABC workers has three parts and proposes that the workers return, that they receive wage increases similar to those already granted to other steelworkers, and that a tripartite committee of workers, businessmen and government representatives be established to study within a 45-day deadline a wage readjustment for those workers who did not receive an increase in the May 1978 strike.

Busdrivers Out

PY211758 Paris AFP in Spanish 1426 GMT 21 Mar 79 PY

[Text] Sao Paulo, 21 Mar (AFP)--Riot police today intervened in a large Sao Paulo suburb to disperse strike pickets organized by busdrivers who began a strike this morning. It is not yet known whether there were any injuries.

Sao Paulo radios reported that the strike is in sympathy with one called by 175,000 steelworkers in the industrial belt of this city, located in southern Brazil, which today went into its 9th day.

VEJA WRITER FACES CHARGES OVER TORTURE ARTICLES

PY221731 Paris AFP in Spanish 1617 GMT 22 Mar 79 PY

[Text] Sao Paulo, 22 Mar (AFP)--The military prosecutor has accused Brazilian journalist Carlos Antonio Fon of violating the national security law in a series of articles on torture published in the magazine VEJA, it was announced here today.

The only objective of these articles, contended the prosecutor, was to prejudice public opinion against the constitutional authorities. If found guilty Fon faces a sentence ranging of 6 months to 5 years.

The articles, which appeared in February, related the crimes and operational methods employed by the police organizations of Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro over the last 10 years.

BRIEFS

CHILEAN NAVAL DELEGATION--A delegation of the Chilean Navy headed by Adm Oscar Parides Vignolo arrived in Rio de Janeiro today. Newspapers report that the delegation may discuss the acquisition of Brazilian-made ships. [Paris AFP in Spanish 1755 GMT 22 Mar 79 PY]

NAVY AVIATION COMMANDER--Rear Adm Aymara Xavier de Souza has been appointed as commander of the Naval Aviation Force, replacing Vice Adm Jose Maria do Amaral Oliveira. [Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2200 GMT 20 Mar 79 PY]

LABOR LEADERS FORM PROGOVERNMENT CONFEDERATION

PY221406 Paris AFP in Spanish 2349 GMT 21 Mar 79 PY

[Text] Santiago, Chile, 21 Mar (AFP)--Union leaders supporting the Chilean military government have created the Chilean Confederation of Labor Organizations [Confederacion de Organizaciones Laborales de Chile]. Observers state that this initiative is in answer to a similar measure adopted 2 weeks ago by four union groups which oppose the official labor policy.

In a letter to Labor Minister Jose Pinera, the leaders of the new group expressed their support for the government led by President Augusto Pinochet and for the labor plan issued at the beginning of 1979.

The group is made up of leaders of the United Agricultural Provinces Peasant Confederation, the National Association of the Retirement Fund for Public Relations Employees and Journalists, the Association of Nurses and leaders of the Foreign Airlines Association.

Last 9 March leaders of the United Workers Front, the Chilean Workers Union, the Chilean Confederation of Private Employees and the National Union Coordinating Board created a common front to oppose the government's labor policy.

ENVOY 'REGRETS' U.S. CONGRESS EXTRADITION REQUEST

PY221300 Santiago Chile Domestic Service in Spanish 1100 GMT 22 Mar 79 PY

[Text] Jose Miguel Barros, Chilean ambassador to the United States, has stated that the request made by the U.S. Congress is unfortunate. He added that the request made by 50 U.S. Congressmen to President Carter to ask Chile to grant extradition of three military officers involved in the Letelier case has a negative effect.

The Chilean diplomat made this statement when asked about a news agency report. Barros regretted this request and added that if the report is true it is unfortunate that some U.S. Congressmen had taken this decision. He said, however, that [words indistinct] 50 Congressmen is small since the U.S. Congress totals about 500. But, he added, despite this low number I still regret that responsible men, representatives of the U.S. people, should be asking their government to exercise pressure on the Chilean Government.

Ambassador Barros expressed hope that the U.S. State Department will put things in their proper place, that is, to reassert its confidence in the Chilean courts. He noted that this demand is unfortunate not only for U.S.-Chilean relations but is also self-defeating because the independence of Chilean courts is quite well known.

BRIEFS

BUSINESS CONFEDERATION--The National Confederation of Small and Medium Enterprises was created here today to protect the interests of middle-class businessmen. (Roberto Barraguez), chairman of the Single National Confederation of Small Industry and Handicrafts, has been appointed chairman of the new confederation, which reportedly groups 600,000 businessmen. In its first declaration the new confederation indicated that it agrees with the principles that guide the economic policy of the government but indicated that implementation of this policy should be improved. [Santiago Chile Domestic Service in Spanish 1730 GMT 14 Mar 79 PY]

TURBAY LAUDS PEOPLE'S ATTITUDE ON PRICE HIKES

PA211844 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 1100 GMT 21 Mar 79 PA

[Text] President Julio Cesar Turbay has lauded the Colombian people's attitude for the way they have received the price increase of fuel and fares. He said that Colombians have matured and have shown good judgment and a patriotic spirit by accepting the government's decisions.

He also said that the government cannot approve a wage increase at this time as he reiterated his confidence in the success of the government's economic policy and assured that there was no reason to decree a state of economic emergency as some labor leaders have suggested.

After visiting the youth center, President Turbay held an informal news conference in which he said that the government is going to wait for reactions before taking further steps in connection with the fuel price increase. He said that the sector most affected was the transportation industry and it was already receiving a subsidy.

He told newsmen that he hopes Congress would make an extra effort during the special session to pass bills submitted to that body which are of interest to the nation. President Turbay also referred to a subversive plot that was smashed by the authorities. However, he added that the threat of subversive groups has not disappeared.

Finally, he said that his administration will give special attention to children's problems.

Meanwhile, the Colombian Petroleum Corporation [ECOPETROL] has promised to take care of the fuel shortage in Valle Department. ECOPETROL assured that once the shortage is solved, supplies to the rest of the country will be normalized. ECOPETROL said that with the new contracts for the purchase of crude and gasoline on the international market, the supply to the whole country will be normal.

WORKERS DECLARE 'STATE OF EMERGENCY' OVER COST OF LIVING

PA222229 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 1700 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Excerpt] The country's labor confederations today notified the government that Colombian workers have declared a state of emergency to protest shortages and the increase in urban transport fares. The country's four large labor unions, the General Labor Confederation, the Union of Colombian Workers, the Trade Union Confederation of Columbian Workers and the [name indistinct], warned the government that they will not issue any more communiques or bulletins on the country's situation but instead will take belligerent actions to protest the high cost of living.

RIOTERS PROTEST BUSFARE HIKES IN BOGOTA, NEIVA

PA221620 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 1100 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Last night, several public service vehicles were stoned by rioters who were protesting the increase in public busfares. A police report indicates that the rioters stationed themselves in various parts of the capital to indulge in their excesses. They began stoning buses at approximately 2000. A bus belonging to the (Sepay) y Mendoza company was partially destroyed by the vandals at the intersection of 6th Street and 4th Avenue in Bogota. Other vehicles were also stoned by the rioters.

The police rapidly moved to the sites of the disturbances and manged to restore calm among the citizens, who had panicked as a result of the continuous stoning. The disturbances lessened considerably by approximately 2100. Bus owners expressed concern that their vehicles might be destroyed.

Severe security measures are to be imposed in Neiva today, the site of violent student disturbances yesterday afternoon. Students began stoning public buses in protest against the increase in urban transportation fares decreed by the government. Approximately 12 students were arrested. Their cases are to be reviewed by the authorities today.

Police and army units are intensively patrolling the city in an effort to guarantee peace.

Cali, Medellin Disturbances

PA230330 Paris AFP in Spanish 0256 GMT 23 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Bogota, 22 Mar (AFP)--New disturbances by students and workers protesting the recent urban transportation fare hike were reported today in Cali and Medellin, it was learned here.

Two policemen were seriously injured in Cali, in the western Colombia, when a bus was burned and another stoned by rioters, some of whom wore hoods and carried Molotov cocktails, especially on the Pan-American Highway on the outskirts of the city.

In Medellin, in northwestern Colombia, police had to intervene strongly to repel a stoning attack on public transportation units. Strong military patrols were established in both cities and some arrests were made.

ARMY DISBANDS NEW GUERRILLA GROUP IN PUTUMAYO

PA222230 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 1700 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Bogota--The government today announced the disbanding of a new guerrilla group that had attempted to begin activities in southern Colombia under the name of the United Forces for Guerrilla Action [Fuerzas Unidas Para la Accion Guerrillera--FUPAG]. According to the Defense Ministry, units of the (Cabal) cavalry group captured Ovidio Rodriguez Lopez, alias Ernesto; Jorge Ivan Pineda Tavera, alias Juan; and Lazaro Pineda Guerra, alias Alvaro Guerrero; who headed the insurgent movement in Agua Blanca, Putamayo Intendancy.

SENATE SATISFIED WITH REPORTS ON DEATHS IN VENEZUELA

PA220231 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 0000 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Bogota--The members of the Senate Second Committee have said they are fully satisfied with the reports issued by the foreign and defense ministers regarding the killing of Colombians in Venezuela. Committee Chairman Edmundo Lopez Gomez said that the committee was more than satisfied with the explanations the government gave regarding the events in Venezuela. Senator Alvaro Garcia stressed that it can be deduced from the report that only two Colombians were killed in Venezuela in November. He played down the significance of rumors about the possible slaughter of Colombians.

Christian Democrat Protest

PA221622 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 1100 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Text] The Colombian Christian Democratic Party has sent a letter to Venezuelan President Luis Herrera Campins protesting the massacre of Colombians on the border between the two countries.

The political party demanded a thorough investigation by the proper authorities and called for an immediate solution to the problem of illegal immigrants.

The Christian Democratic Party called for a pronouncement by the government regarding the investigations conducted so far regarding the case.

DRUG TRAFFICKERS INVESTING IN REAL ESTATE

PA221618 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 1100 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Economic Development Minister Gilberto Echeverry Mejia disclosed to the Senate Plenum that drug trafficking rings are investing large sums of money derived from their illicit activities in real estate in order to infiltrate the field of urbanization.

The minister made the disclosure during an address delivered to the Senate urging the formulation of a bill calling for obligatory investments [as heard] by insurance companies to expand the coverage ofpublic housing in Colombia.

[Begin Echeverry Mejia recording] No one in Colombia is unaware of what is occurring in the underworld economy [economia de segundo piso]. Money from the Mafia--from kidnapings and drugs--is flowing into the monetary current every day and needs to be made legally Colombian. The only area in which those gentlemen have been able to accomplish this is in the area of real estate, and they have established a demand for apartments and land that has created false and absurd prices.

Fortunately, the Territorial Credit Institute has a good reserve of land, which partially serves as a buffer in the present crisis since the institute is not obliged to make continous purchases.

In any case, Senator Yepes' statement is valid. I would not dare to deny this before any judge. There are many housing projects that are (?affected). Senator Restrepo knows of the case of [word indistinct]. For over 2 years, a 1,500-unit project was closed. A guard was killed so that the toilets could be stolen. The locks were filled with dust because the public enterprises of Barranquilla failed to provide the necessary water and sewage systems. [end recording]

The bill for refinancing the Territorial Credit Institute was approved last night in a second round of debate. It will go to the Chamber of Deputies in the next few days.

PAPER AGREES WITH ARGENTINE EDITORIAL ON HUMAN RIGHTS

FY221843 Asuncion PATRIA in Spanish 22 Mar 79 p 7 PY

[PATRIA editor's note published along with reprint of Buenos Aires LA PRENSA 21 March editorial]

[Text] We believe the editorial published by the Buenos Aires newspaper LA PRENSA is very important. The subject is of the utmost interest, and LA PRENSA's position on the subject is in full agreement with the position supported by the Paraguayan Government of President Stroessner and by the Colorado Party. This same column has made reference in numerous occasions to this subject, arriving at the same conclusions on the basis of the same principles: Nonintervention in the internal affairs of other countries and the right of citizens to decide on the domestic affairs of their own country.

We will comment on this in future issues, but for now the reader should examine the forthrightness of the article's expressions and be aware of our position in echoing them in order to honor truth and the postulates of a superior ethic, despite the fact that it is very difficult and a rare exception for this paper to agree with LA PRENSA because of its systematic attacks on Paraguay. Since we do not take LA PRENSA as being representative of Argentina and since it is our sister nation, and since this is a subject to which we cannot be indifferent, we have no qualms in agreeing with the paper's position.

[The editorial was published on page B 1 of the 22 March Latin America DAILY REPORT.]

LAINO DENOUNCES 'PERSECUTION' IN LARA CASTRO CASE

PY101645 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 10 Mar 79 p 14 PY

[Text] Dr Domingo Laino was present in the criminal court yesterday to observe the hearing in the case of Mrs Lara Castro. Questioned by this newspaper, he said: "I regard this as a clear case of political persecution against the Commission for the Defense of Human Rights and against its honorable president."

He added: "I think the attorney general should concern himself with investigating other matters that disturb the public, such as what became of the 6 million guaranies appropriated for the Palace of Justice, the murder of peasant leader Doroteo Grandell and many other questions of the sort which ought to be under his purview and which the public would appreciate--but not an investigation of such a noble entity as the Commission for the Defense of Human Rights."

BRIEFS

JAPANESE COOPERATION--A technical cooperation agreement between our country and the Japanese Government was signed this morning at the Agriculture and Livestock Ministry. The Japanese aid is a nonrepayable loan and will be used for research programs, forest development and agricultural mechanization in the department of Itapua. With regard to research, the Captain Miranda experimental station will be expanded with the establishment of various support units, equipment, laboratory buildings and training for professionals and selected farmers. [Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 16 Mar 79 p 8 PY]

FRENCH DELEGATION--A delegation of French businessmen headed by former French Minister Jacques Soustelle arrived Sunday with the purpose of meeting with Paraguayan officials to discuss the possibility of investing in government projects. [Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 20 Mar 79 p 11 PY]

FOREIGN MINISTER FAVORS NEGOTIATIONS WITH COLOMBIA

PA221705 Caracas VENPRES Diplomatic Information Service in Spanish 2231 GMT 20 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Caracas, 19 Mar (VENPRES)--Venezuelan Foreign Minister Dr Jose Alberto Zambrano Velasco made the following statement at Miraflores Palace today: I completely disagree with the statements made by Dr Alfredo Vasquez Carrisoza because we have always maintained that the border problems between Venezuela and Colombia must be solved through direct negotiations. The foreign minister began his statements by noting that there is no specific date for renewing the talks on differences with Colombia.

Former Colombian Foreign Minister Vasquez Carrisoza has said that the negotiations on the Colombian-Venezuelan issue are stagnant and exhausted and that it is necessary that the two countries now avail themselves of international legal procedures.

Zambrano noted that the new administration has just taken over the government and that "I began working from the Foreign Ministry only this morning, since I had to go to Brasilia for the Brazilian president's swearing-in ceremony." He said that as soon as there is a specific date, the news media will be informed.

When asked if he had discussed this matter with President Luis Herrera Campins during their lengthy meeting this morning, the minister said that he had not and that they had only discussed general aspects of international policy.

Regarding the statements made by the former Colombian foreign minister, he said that he completely disagrees with them because he has always maintained that these problems must be solved through direct negotiations. He noted that he believes negotiation is a road that can never be exhausted when states firmly desire to find just and equitable solutions to their problems. He said he believes that the border issue is of vital interest for Venezuela, and because of this it must be discussed in cordial negotiations.

The minister concluded by stating that Venezuela has not considered taking the problem to an international court, as Vasquez Carrisoza has proposed. Venezuela has maintained that the matter must be solved in a friendly and cordial manner through direct negotiations.

FINANCE COMMISSION TO STUDY PUBLIC DEBT

PA212153 Caracas Radio Rumbos Network in Spanish 1530 GMT 21 Mar 79 PA

[Text] A commission entrusted with studying the total public debt of the central government has been installed. President Luis Herrera Campins appointed the members of the commission, which was installed in the Finance Ministry.

Finance Minister Luis Sujeto said that the commission will immediately begin studying the expenditures and total public debt of the central government which includes the public debt of the republic, amounting to 51.801 billion bolivares, and the floating debt which the ministry has not yet established.

The commission members are: Chairman Juan Jose (Bolinaga), former president of the National Institute of Sewers and Waterworks; Isolda Heredia de Salvatierra and Pablo Zevallos.

11 PARTIES FORM NATIONAL OPPOSITION FRONT

PA211551 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 0340 21 Mar 79 PA

[Text] This afternoon, 11 political opposition organizations formed the National Opposition Front [Frente Nacional de Oposicion--FRENO], the most representative groups of which are the Panamenist, Liberal, Republican, Christian Democratic and Agrarian Labor parties.

The new organization has urged the national government to call immediate direct elections for the president and members of the legislative body. In addition, the Broad Opposition Front [as heard] has demanded the appointment of an electoral tribunal comprising all representative groups and the recovery of the nation's democracy. According to information received here, the Broad Opposition Front will issue a communique to the nation in the next few hours.

Meanwhile, the political parties comprising FRENO will submit the agreements reached today for the consideration of their respective leadership bodies.

Further Details

PA211958 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 1800 GMT 21 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Ten [as heard] representatives of political parties reached an agreement last night to change the elements of the current national political system that are hindering effective democracy and freedom in Panama.

The representatives of the Democratic Independent Movement, the Christian Democratic Party, the Liberal Party, the Progressive Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Women's Patriotic Front, the National Liberation Movement, the Panamenist Party, the Republican Party and the National Renovation Union signed a document last night establishing a front to struggle for the full recovery of democracy in our country, to demand that public power be obtained directly from the will of the people through free elections with the participation of political parties and to demand that an electoral tribunal where opposition parties will be duly respected will be guaranteed.

The document also says the front will struggle for the separation of the legislative, executive and judiciary branches, without the interference of the National Guard. It reiterates the need for direct presidential elections, declares the urgent need to directly elect all members of the legislative branch and insists on the need to guarantee the independence, honesty and impartiality of the judiciary branch while allowing for its own resources and autonomy.

The document also demands that anyone is free to establish and operate newspapers, radio stations or any social communication media without any obstacles. Concerning this last point, the document points out that the political groups forming this front will struggle for full enforcement of freedom of the press and the independence of radio commentators. Likewise, they demand an administrative and legal status that will guarantee effective respect for citizens' public and political rights and full respect for human rights.

The persons signing the document also agreed to form a National Opposition Front [Frente Nacional de Oposicion--FRENO] that will be open to all political parties and organizations desiring to join.

The document, which will be presented to the various political organizations for their ratification, was signed by Mario Galindo and Diogenes Arosemena, for the Democratic Independent Movement; Rene Crespo, for the National Liberation Movement; Jose Antonio Sossa, for the Christian Democratic Party; Oscar Pereira Burgos, Oscar Ucros, Jaime Ortega and Carlos Lucas Lopez, for the Panamanian Liberal Party; Carlos Ernesto Gonzalez and Winston Robles, for the Social Democratic Party; Thelma King, for the Women's Patriotic Front; Jorge Adames, Hildebrando Nicosia and Guillermo Endara, for the Panamenist Party; Raul Aponte, for the Republican Party; and Luis Barletta, for the National Renovation Union.

CANAL TREATY ADVISORY GROUP CREATED

PA221435 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 2315 GMT 21 Mar 79 PA

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister Carlos Ozores has announced the creation of a Panama Canal Treaty Advisory Group. The members of the group will be tasked with clarifying concepts and adopting political positions regarding the Panama Canal treaties. The advisory group created today is headed by Foreign Minister Ozores and has as members Adolfo Ahumada, government and justice minister; Romulo Escobar Bethancourt, chief negotiator; Gabriel Lewis Galindo, director of the Panama Canal Authority; and Diogenes de la Rosa. According to the minister, the group will act to solve problems of interpretation that may arise in the future regarding implementation of the Torrijos-Carter treaty, as was the case with the 1903 treaty.

CANAL AUTHORITY ADVISER DENIES RESIGNATION

PA230312 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 21 Mar 79 pp 1, 24 PA

[Letter to LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA Director Tomas Altamirano Duque from Roberto Heurtematte, adviser to the Canal Authority director general, dated 20 March]

[Text] I am writing this letter to correct an erroneous report broadcast today over a radio station regarding my alleged separation from the Canal Authority. For this reason, I ask you to make this letter public. I did not listen to the newscast so I will not comment on it. I only wish to state that I have not resigned from the Canal Authority and continue to be an adviser to the director general, my good friend Mr Gabriel Lewis Galindo.

The Canal Authority is in charge of a task of great magnitude and multidisciplinary complications. In its effort to undertake this task, it has wanted to gather the most capable individuals and place them at the disposition of the authorities. It has also wanted to link the public and private sectors in the programming process. Implementing the recovery of our jurisdiction over the Canal Zone territory deserves the support and encouragement of the entire community. On my part, I believe I have been honored by being asked to participate. Because of this, I express deep thanks to Gen Omar Torrijos, who appointed me a member of the first work group, and President Royo, who appointed me adviser.

Signed sincerely, Roberto Heurtematte, adviser, 21 Mar 79

MISSION GOES TO EUROPE IN SEARCH OF BETTER OIL PRICES

PA222000 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 1730 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Text] A Panamanian mission headed by Carlos Perez Herrera is currently in Europe to negotiate the purchase of oil at reasonable prices, Commerce and Industries Minister Juan Jose Amado III told a local newspaper.

Ecuador, one of our suppliers of hydrocarbons, recently increased the price of each barrel of oil by 3 balboas. This has forced countries such as Panama to seek other sources that will provide the crude at better prices.

Minister Amado also announced that the Panama refinery will perform maintenance on its machinery in April but that this will not affect consumers because the company has enough reserves to supply the community with hydrocarbons.

RADIO LIBERTAD INTERVIEWS LIBERAL PARTY LEADER

PA230206 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 2005 GMT 21 Mar 79 PA

[Eduardo Herrera interview with National Liberal Party leader Guillermo Elias Quijano; no date or place given--recorded]

[Excerpts] [Question] Mr Quijano, tell us about the recently created National Opposition Front, known as FRENO, which is the political story of the day.

[Answer] We had to reach a decision on which all opposition groups realized that there is only one way to make ourselves heard, and that is united, with enthusiasm, love and understanding, knowing that our country needs a legitimate and honest opposition.

A government without opposition will surely fail because it will believe that everything it does is correct since there is no one to point out its mistakes. With an organized opposition, however, the government will have the opportunity to implement recommendations by the opposition immediately or as the circumstances demand. Then we could start to think of Panama's social, economic and political recovery.

[Question] What are the National Opposition Front's immediate plans?

[Answer] I cannot answer that question because the front's constitutive document was signed only last night. It is now being submitted to the leaderships of the organizations represented in the front for their approval.

[Question] Does the creation of this front not affect the registration of the parties included in it?

[Answer] We feel the important thing for a party is not its registration but its reorganization. The creation of FRENO plays an important role which I am sure will have priority over any registration.

Speaking as a member of the Liberal Party, I believe that we must not spend our time registering a party that has no functions for the time being. I say this because all political parties must have an immediate motivation or objective that will give them the necessary force to carry out a registration that survives the test of an electoral confrontation. Otherwise, such a registration, without the proper organization and preparation, would be like registering an empty shell that would easily crumble if put to an electoral test under such circumstances.

[Question] How can FRENO function within a legal political status?

[Answer] I personally have never recognized the electoral law as the proper instrument to regulate us politically. Such a law lacks a number of conditions that are necessary to provide sufficient guarantees to the political parties.

When the high-level commission was appointed, distinguished personalities, who were appointed by the president of the party's national leadership, participated in the name of the Liberal Party without prior authorization by the national leadership. This commission prepared a draft amendment to regulate everything concerned with the return to the party system.

The recommendations adopted by this commission, however, were not respected by the current government's organizations. The legal dispositions issued by the executive branch or by the so-called legislative organizations disregarded the commission's recommendations and imposed conditions and rules that are far from guaranteeing effectively the political rights of the citizens and their partisan organizations.

[Question] Historically, the Liberal Party has opposed Dr Arnulfo Arias on many occasions and has constituted the opposition to his administration. How can one conceive of an alliance within FRENO between these two antagonistic forces?

[Answer] Dr Arias, his party, the Independent Democratic Movement, the National Liberation Movement, the Social Democratic Party, the Republican Party, the National Renovation Union (URNA) and the other parties and groups about to join this movement on this occasion coincide in that we all disagree with the system currently ruling my country's politics. We are seeking, through every possible peaceful means, to make the government understand that it cannot rule for a handful of citizens, only for the great majority of the country.

[Question] What methods will FRENO use to convince the government to adopt a formula that will be of interest to this opposition organization?

[Answer] I cannot advance an answer to this because, as I already said, we reached an agreement just last night. I can assure you, however, that this front has been constituted in good faith to give it force and to lead to the creation of an instrument that will necessarily prompt the government to reconsider all that it is doing.

[Question] Some political analysts point out that FRENO is a group of political leaders with no popular support. What have you to say about that?

[Answer] In organizing a body such as the National Opposition Front, it is necessary to have men of all types who will complement each other in the overall task. I believe in the effectiveness of this opposition union precisely because there has been no demand on any party member to have a specific number of affiliations. Instead, there has been evidence of the will to join forces and work in consultation for the best interests of the country. That is our goal.

[Question] Would FRENO be willing to talk with the government?

[Answer] First we must complete the organization of the front and then it will be up to its leadership to determine whether to talk with the government or with other groups. That is why I would not even dare advance my own personal opinion in this respect.

COSTA RICA

GOVERNMENT CRITICIZED DURING NATIONAL DIALOG

PA221709 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1100 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Excerpts] The participants in the national dialog yesterday were divided into five commissions and most of them harshly criticized the administration. They all agreed on requesting austerity and a rational use of resources in order to prevent further problems in the energy crisis. Several commissions openly criticized the Costa Rican Institute of Electricity [ICE] and blamed it for many of the problems affecting the country. The rationing of electricity is the result of the inefficiency of the ICE and, therefore, it was requested that its operations be reviewed.

A commission asked the government to exercise more austerity and help private enterprise in doing likewise. One commission said the government was deteriorating and could head for failure if it disappointed the people.

CARAZO TO TOUR CENTRAL AMERICA IN APRIL

PA222001 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1630 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Text] President Rodrigo Carazo will visit Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador next month. President Carazo will meet with the chiefs of state of the Central American countries, with the exception of Nicaragua, to discuss economic integration and the Central American Common Market.

SALVADORAN FOREIGN MINISTER ARRIVES FOR VISIT

PA221604 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1100 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Salvadoran Foreign Minister Jose Antonio Rodriguez Porth arrived in Costa Rica last night for a 2-day visit, Costa Rican Foreign Minister Rafael Angel Calderon Fournier has announced. The Salvadoran foreign minister will meet with Costa Rican President Carazo and other government officials to discuss the problems of the Central American Common Market. Rodriguez Porth will visit other Central American countries in an effort to solve problems affecting economic integration.

EL SALVADOR

INDUSTRIALIST EXECUTED; FATE OF OTHERS UNKNOWN

PA221534 San Salvador Cadena Sonora in Spanish 1248 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Distributed by the Inter-Central American Radio Organization]

[Text] The body of Mr Ernesto Liebes, with several bullet wounds evident, was discovered last night inside a car with license plate No 106162. The car was parked in Monserrat colony. This caused a state of general alarm among the residents of that populous sector. Several residents gave the alarm after seeing a man lying inside the vehicle with a piece of cloth on his face. The discovery was made at about 2030 and all security corps, (?police) and forensic medicine authorities on duty were notified immediately. Nonetheless, the body was not identified until 0030 because the judge on duty was busy with other activities connected with his post. After the judicial official arrived, the piece of cloth was removed from the body's face and the cadaver was identified.

Ernesto Liebes, a prominent industrialist and coffee exporter, held the post of honorary Israeli consul in El Salvador. He was kidnaped by the Armed Forces of National Resistance on 17 January 1979. The British bankers kidnaped on 30 November last year are still being held. Japanese industrialist Takakazu Suzuki is another of this clandestine organization's hostages.

The first fatal outcome, that is, the assassination of 72-year-old Mr Ernesto Liebes, has occurred because the deadline had expired and the demands had not been met.

For a while, it was even rumored that Mr Suzuki had been released. There was also a report that a car containing the body of a man had been found on the road to [name indistinct]. Presumably he was another one of the hostages, but none of these reports could be confirmed by either the national police or the judge on duty.

KIDNAPED BRITISH EXECUTIVES KILLED BY FARN

PA230358 Paris AFP in Spanish 0340 GMT 23 Mar 79 PA

[Text] San Salvador, 22 Mar (AFP)--A telephone call received at the AFP office at 1700 (0100 GMT) announced that British banking executives Ian Massie and Michael Chaterton were killed today. The caller, said to be calling on behalf of the Armed Forces of National Resistance [FARN], which kidnaped the British executives on 30 November 1978, reported that the place where the bodies will be found will be revealed at 2200 (0400 GMT).

Before this call, FARN had announced the death of Ernesto Liebes, Israeli consul in El Salvador, whose body had already been found. He had been kidnaped on 17 January.

The Britons and Israeli were killed after the Salvadoran Government had refused to release five political prisoners, claiming that it did not have them.

Meanwhile, it is expected that Japanese businessman Takakazu Suzuki will be released at any time. He was kidnaped on 7 December. The FARN has reported that great progress had been made in negotiations on his release.

MILITARY UNITS OCCUPY SAN MIGUEL POWER SUBSTATION

PA211321 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0051 GMT 21 Mar 79 PA

[Text] San Salvador, 20 Mar (ACAN-EFE)--Electric workers union leaders tonight reported that military units had occupied the San Miguel power substation, located 130 km east of San Salvador.

They said it was occupied several hours after the workers restored power, which had been cut off for 23 hours and greatly disrupted activities in the country, and when negotiations are underway at the Labor Ministry to solve the dispute.

A spokesman for the workers told ACAN-EFE that the military occupation of San Miguel, the country's third most important city, has heightened tension in the other power supply centers.

They did not discard the possibility of another blackout should the military occupation be extended.

The spokesmen said the negotiations will continue today until a settlement is reached to their demands for wage increases and other social services.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS STRIKE ENDS FOLLOWING NEGOTIATIONS

PA221716 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1623 GMT 21 Mar 79 PA

[Text] San Salvador, 21 Mar (ACAN-EFE)--Workers and businessmen of the Lempa River Executive Committee today, Wednesday, solved the labor conflict that resulted in the 23-hour paralyzation of most activities in El Salvador.

According to initial estimates by Salvadoran economists, the electric power cut that lasted almost an entire day and that resulted from the strike by electrical workers, resulted in losses of more than $24 million.

In negotiations that went on for 17 consecutive hours between the conflicting parties, the participants discussed and approved 23 demands made by the workers.

GUATEMALA

UNITED REVOLUTIONARY FRONT LEADER KILLED

PA221809 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 1744 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Guatemala City, 22 Mar (LATIN)--Manuel Colom Argueta, top leader of the United Revolutionary Front, was assassinated today by several unidentified individuals, the authorities reported.

The assailants fired several rounds of machinegun fire at Colom, 44, who was the leader of a leftist party that was recently registered based on the political opening sponsored by Gen Romeo Lucas Garcia. Colom was on his way to his office on 6th Avenue south in this city. He was accompanied by a 22-yesr-old domestic employee and two bodyguards. The politician and one of his bodyguards died in the attack.

Colom Argueta's death raises to two the cases of high-ranking political leaders who have been assassinated as a result of the wave of violence plaguing Guatemala. Congressman Alberto Fuentes Mora was the leader of a leftist group that is trying to register as a political party.

Condemnation of Killing

PA230351 Paris AFP in Spanish 0223 GMT 23 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Guatemala City, 22 Mar (AFP)--Guatemalan President Fernando Romeo Lucas and Vice President Francisco Villagran Kramer today joined the general condemnation expressed by various organizations of the killing of leftist leader Manuel Colom Argueta, who was assassinated today. In a communique issued a few hours after the crime, the president and vice president described the assassins as "dark forces." They indicated that the crime, which "they lament," had the "deliberate objective of preventing the search for peace and economic and social development and hindering the participation of organizations of various ideologies in the nation's political life."

They indicated that "an extensive investigation has been begun to find those responsible for the crime" and that orders have been given to the security forces to "protect the leaders of the legally established political organizations so that events such as today's are not repeated."

SUBVERSIVE GROUPS INVITED TO ANTIVIOLENCE DIALOG

PA211325 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2201 GMT 19 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Guatemala City, 19 Mar (ACAN-EFE)--The Guatemalan Nationalist United Front (FUN), a right-center party, today extended a formal invitation to extremist subversive groups to participate in a multiparty summit seeking to stop the violence in the country.

Federico Salazar Valdez, secretary general of the organization participating in the forum sponsored by the Christian Democrats, said that "without the participation of the groups openly engaged in violence, the failure of the meeting is not only predictable, but obvious."

To the Nationalist United Front, the search for the causes of violence cannot ignore any groups, including clandestine ones, that are connected in one way or another to the climate of violence affecting Guatemala.

The second meeting of the leaders of political parties and those groups seeking legal recognition who are engaged in looking for "alternatives to the problem of violence running rampant in Guatemala" will be held this week on a date to be announced by the FUN.

NICARAGUA

POLICE CHIEF NEGOTIATES WITH BANK ATTACKERS

PA221329 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1226 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Direct report from Managua]

[Excerpts] We now have details from Managua, Nicaragua on the bank holdup and hostages. The Managua police chief has asked the three men who are holding 15 hostages in a savings and loan bank to appoint their lawyers so they can be brought before a civilian court, provided they surrender. Col Nicolas Valle Salinas made this proposal 10 hours after the military authorities foiled the attack on the Niapsa savings and loan bank, forcing the attackers--presumably members of the Sandinist National Liberation Front--to again enter the building where they took the employees hostage.

Valle Salinas said that apparently two of the criminals are willing to surrender but that the third person is a bit undecided. During the attack, which occurred at 1500 yesterday, one of the attackers was killed in a shootout with the army. Two others fled.

President Anastasio Somoza is one of the largest shareholders in Niapsa and his nephew, Guillermo Sevilla Somoza, is the general manager. He is not among the hostages.

Meanwhile, a priest, (Allan) Delgado, who is trying to assist in this case, said early this morning that the negotiations are progressing well and that they are awaiting the attackers' answer to Colonel Valle Salinas' proposal. Early this morning, Dr Carlos Gomez (Marin), civil judge of the Third Court, came to prepare the dossier on the case inasmuch as Colonel Valle Salinas has declared it a public legal case.

The building housing the Niapsa office is situated in southeastern Managua. It is easy to see what is going on inside the building as there is a huge bay window. As time passes, the reporters and the soldiers have lost their fear, to the point that they have moved up to about 5 meters from the attackers, separated only by the glass window.

The reporters were able to see that one of the kidnapers was holding a gun at the head of one of the hostages, Marisa (Mayorga), who was sitting on a chair facing the kidnaper. The reporters also saw the other two kidnapers stretched out on a rug. One of the kidnapers is a girl about 20 years of age, who has a gun and a grenade in her hand. The other hostages, of which nine are women, were lying on the floor but their hands and feet were not bound.

At first, about 200 soldiers surrounded the building but 10 hours after the shootout, the number of soldiers in the area has been considerably reduced. A spokesman for the army, who requested that his name be withheld, said that they believed the incident would be over within the next few hours, without further bloodshed.

Stalemate at Bank

PA221826 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1720 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Filadelfo Aleman report from Managua--live]

[Text] The situation existing at this time between a group of guerrillas who assaulted the Niapsa branch in Managua yesterday and the authorities is that the National Guard has issued an ultimatum to the guerrillas to vacate the Niapsa premises, an institution which they assaulted yesterday. They were forced to take refugee inside the building and to take as hostages, 16 people who work for the institution.

The situation at present, as I have said, is that the guerrillas are inside the institution and say that they will not surrender, while the National Guard has urged them to vacate the premises, has promised to turn them over to civil courts and has offered guarantees for their lives.

However, the guerrillas maintain that they have requested asylum and that if they do not receive it, they will never surrender. Meanwhile, three persons who were being held hostage in the Niapsa installation--among them Miss Milena Parrales and Mrs Eloisa Arauz--were released this morning because they were very ill. Meanwhile, the entire sector of Niapsa, located at kilometer [indistinct] on the road leading to the Costa Rica highway in Managua, remains heavily cordoned off by National Guardsmen carrying weapons of all kinds. Many Red Cross ambulances are on standby, ready for any emergency resulting from this situation.

The guerrillas have identified themselves as members of the People's Armed Organization [Organizacion Armada del Pueblo] a group heretofore unknown in Nicaragua. Apparently, the guerrillas inside Niapsa include four men and one young woman, who was the first to speak yesterday afternoon. She said that at least 10 persons had participated in the attempted assault on Niapsa. They were about to escape when a National Guard patrol happened to pass by and ran into them. One of the assailants was killed. So far he has not been identified.

One of the Niapsa guards who managed to escape reported that four individuals had entered the building, three of whom remained inside, while another had come out firing.

The situation, as I have told you, is very tense at this time. Hundreds of onlookers have congregated around the savings and loan institution to await the outcome, which could take one of two forms, depending on the attitude taken by the guerrillas, who are holding some 13 hostages at this time. They maintain that they will not surrender unless they are granted political asylum and their lives are guaranteed, while the authorities are saying that they will not give political asylum and that they will only guarantee their lives and trial by civil courts.

At present the guerrillas are not receiving food. Water has been cut off and it is said here that they will most likely surrender in the next few hours. However, that remains to be seen.

Release of Hostages

PA222357 Paris AFP in Spanish 2305 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Managua, 22 Mar--This afternoon the Sandinist People's Army Command released 5 women from the 15 hostages it has been holding in a financial institution in southwest Managua since yesterday. The command is still holding six men and four women.

It was learned that the two men and the woman who are occupying the savings association, owned by a member of the Somoza family, reiterated that they will continue holding their hostages until the government accepts their request for political asylum at the Mexican Embassy.

Mexican Charge d'Affaires Gustavo Iruhela, who is currently in charge of the Mexican Embassy, arrived at the scene, but Nicaraguan authorities refused to approve the requested asylum.

The authorities reaffirmed that if the guerrillas surrender they will be guaranteed their civil rights and will be tried in a civil court. To prove this, they brought judge Gustavo Gomez to the building occupied by the group.

Well-informed sources reported here that the People's Army, which has Maoist leanings, was created in 1972 and reappeared yesterday after 5 years of silence.

THREE KILLED IN MANAGUA TRAVEL AGENCY HOLDUP

PA222356 Paris AFP in Spanish 2246 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Managua, 22 Mar (AFP)--It has been reported that three persons were killed when a military patrol clashed with a group holding up a travel agency located in the same Managua suburb where a Sandinist command has been keeping 10 persons hostage for the past 27 hours.

Two of the persons killed were the assailants and the other was the owner of the Euro-Americana Travel Agency, which the assailants were trying to rob. The owner was Roger Miranda, approximately 40 years of age. The others have not been identified yet.

The incident occurred near the Niapsa savings office where 3 members of the People's Military Organization [Organizacion Militar del Pueblo--OMP] are holding 10 employees who have been without water and food for the past 27 hours.

Press sources believe that the police may try to launch an attack against the command's two men and one woman at any time because of the exhaustion they are probably experiencing.

The Radio Command Office prohibited transmission of news reports from the site of the kidnaping while Managua Police Commander Col Nicolas Valle Salinas gave the youths an ultimatum to surrender. The situation remains the same at 1545 (2145 GMT).

FSLN WARNS NEIGHBORING REGIMES NOT TO INTERFERE

PA230103 (Clandestine) Radio Sandino in Spanish to Nicaragua 2230 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] The Yankees, using every possible maneuver to foil the victory of the Nicaraguan people, are availing themselves of the military governments of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, which have always indentified themselves with the tyrant Somoza and now have hastily placed themselves at the service of the dictator, following orders issued by the Yankees. The military governments of Honduras and El Salvador dear that the winds of freedom released and encouraged by the Sandinist Front may reach their people, who are also exploited by the lackeys of the Yankees. However, knowing those brotherly peoples, we are sure they will not allow any maneuver against our people.

The situation in Central America is explosive as the result of our condition of dependence and the indiscriminate sacking by Yankee monopolies. We warn those military governments not to interfere directly in our affairs because they will not leave this country alive. Our people will rise united, ready to uphold at any price the freedom we are about to gain. We are not alone; we have the moral as well as material support of our brothers in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador who have joined the glorious ranks of the FSLN.

The precarious situation of Yankee imperialism makes it adopt desperate positions. We are aware of imperialism's plans to use its puppets in other Central American countries to conduct all sorts of dark actions against our people and their struggle, but we declare they will be signing their death sentence, and Yankee imperialism will be the big loser.

The winds of freedom are spreading throughout Central America as the product of the [words indistinct] that show the direction of the world's historic changes. We are on our way to social progress, democracy and independence. The people will win because the future is theirs.

Free fatherland or death!

MINREX ISSUES STATEMENT ON PRC ACTIONS ON LAOS BORDER

FL221114 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1102 GMT 22 Mar 79 FL

[Text] Our country's Foreign Relations Ministry [MINREX] has issued a statement whose text reads as follows:

It is public knowledge that the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic has repeatedly reported that the Beijing ruling clique is carrying out a number of actions of an aggressive nature against the peaceful people of Laos. They include the massing of troops on the common border, intensive espionage activity and inciting disturbances, as well as constant armed violations of the territory of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

The MINREX statement adds that these actions, which are an attack on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, once again show the hegemonic and expansionist nature of the policy of the Chinese rulers.

The MINREX of the Republic of Cuba expresses its deepest concern over the threat to international peace and security involved in the adventurous policy of the Chinese rulers. This is stated in the statement issued by MINREX whose text adds: The MINREX of the Republic of Cuba, in keeping with the principles and objectives of the UN Charter, calls on all peoples and governments that love peace and justice to offer their firmest and solidary support to the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Lastly, the MINREX statement demands an end to the aggressive actions of the Government of the People's Republic of China against the Lao People's Democratic Republic, a small nonalined country that is trying courageously to forge its future.

POLISH PREMIER HAILS CUBAN-POLISH RELATIONS

FL221649 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 22 Mar 79 FL

[Text] Warsaw--Polish Premier Piotr Jaroszewicz today stressed the similarity of positions of his country and Cuba regarding the principal international problems. He also described the multifarious bilateral relations as very valuable.

In an interview granted to PRENSA LATINA, Jaroszewicz, who soon will be making an official and friendly visit to Cuba, said Poland and Cuba fully concur in their objectives to consolidate peace in the world, deepen the process of detente and make it solidly irreversible.

He said his country highly values Cuba's consistent and anti-imperialist position in the nonalined countries movement and the role Cuba plays in offering internationalist assistance and support to people who are struggling for their political and economic independence.

Jaroszewicz said both governments maintain firm positions of rejection of the Chinese rulers' aggressive and hegemonic policy and of solidarity with the struggle of the Vietnamese people. We believe, he said, that the final victory will be for these people.

In examining current Polish-Cuban cooperation, the premier said it is going well and has numerous possibilities of expanding. He noted that bilateral trade in 1979 will amount to 60 million rubles or 50 percent more than in 1968 [as heard], and work is being done to coordinate economic programs in the two countries for the 1981-85 period.

He asserted that Poland is especially seeking to increase its participation in bilateral cooperation with Cuba and within CEMA, citing the sugar, naval, paper and industrial sectors in general as important ones in such cooperation. Our mutual trade program, the Polish premier said, is ambitious, but we are justifiably optimistic about its realization.

162 FORMER PRISONERS, RELATIVES LEAVE FOR U.S.

PA221429 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0058 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Havana, 21 Mar (EFE)--A group of 162 persons, including 60 political prisoners, 13 former prisoners and 89 relatives, left for the United States today after receiving the Cuban Government's authorization to do so. The 60 political prisoners are part of the 400 persons released by the Cuban authorities on 31 December as a result of the agreements signed on 8 December 1978 by Cuban President Fidel Castro and the representatives of the Cuban community abroad.

The trip, made aboard a plane expressly brought in from Miami for this purpose, was organized by the "Committee of 75," the group which held a dialog with the Cuban authorities to obtain a total amnesty for the 3,600 political prisoners who were imprisoned in Cuban jails at the time. As in the case of the previous group which traveled to the United States last February, the U.S. airline "Southeast Airlines" offered its services free of charge.

According to the political circles consulted by this agency in Havana, this type of flight will be increased in coming months as the 2,700 political prisoners still remaining in the Cuban jails are released and as those who desire it are able to obtain admission into the United States.

GEPLACEA SUGARCANE BYPRODUCTS SEMINAR ENDS IN HAVANA

FL221104 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 22 Mar 79 FL

[Text] The Economic Group of Latin America and Caribbean Sugar Exporting Countries--GEPLACEA--must face sugar importers with a firm position in order to obtain a rise in the price of sugar which currently is very low. Guido Garcia, Cuban vice minister of the sugar industry, made this statement yesterday in his closing remarks at the international seminar on sugarcane byproducts. The seminar was held at the sugar industry training center in Havana.

The sugar industry vice minister announced that 20 sugarcane byproducts processing plants will begin operations during the next 5-year period [1981-85]. Guido Garcia recalled that Comdr Che Guevara asserted in 1963 that in the course of time sugarcane byproducts would be as important as sugar.

Reports on the production of pulp and paper and prospects of sugarcane products until the year 2000 were rendered at the last session of the seminar.

FIDEL CASTRO DECORATES OUTGOING SOVIET ENVOY

FL211102 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 21 Mar 79 FL

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, first secretary of the PCC Central Committee and president of the Councils of State and Ministers, has presented the 20th Anniversary Commemorative Medal to Soviet Ambassador to Cuba Nikita P. Tolubeyev.

By decision of the Council of States, the decoration was awarded to CPSU Central Committee member Tolubeyev for the work he has done over the past 8 years as USSR diplomatic representative in our country, during which he contributed to the expansion and strengthening of the ties of friendship and brotherhood that bind the parties, governments and peoples of the Soviet Union and Cuba.

The 20th anniversary medal was created on 16 July 1973 to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the attack on Moncada Barracks which marked the last phase of the liberation of Cuba that began on 26 July 1953.

PEREZ HERRERO TOURS NUEVITAS INDUSTRIAL AREA

FL222334 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 22 Mar 79 FL

[Text] PCC Central Committee Secretariat member Antonio Perez Herrero has conducted an extensive tour of the industrial city of Nuevitas accompanied by Lazaro Vazquez Garcia, second party secretary in Camaguey. Perez Herrero visited the October Revolution fertilizer enterprise, the foodstuffs warehouse and the fishing port, where Perez Herrero was given a detailed briefing on efforts being made to improve the system of roads leading to the maritime terminal.

MILIAN VISITS ISLE OF YOUTH AGRICULTURAL AREAS

FL221156 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1147 GMT 22 Mar 79 FL

[Text] Arnaldo Milian Castro, member of the PCC Central Committee Politburo, has toured installations and districts of the agricultural-livestock sector in the Isle of Youth. Milian, accompanied by Felix Mojena Beltran, party second secretary in that territory, visited the citrus area, where he pointed out the need to seek varieties of citrus, vegetables and fruits in order to increase the capacity of this industry.

The tour included the Patria, Vietnam, Enlace and Libertad citrus districts, where the party leader was briefed on the work being done to fulfill [production] pledges for this year. Lastly, Milian Castro visited new crop fields at the (Andrey Grechko) rural basic secondary school located at the Isle of Youth Special Municipality.

FERNANDEZ RECEIVES VISITING UNESCO OFFICIAL

FL222319 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 22 Mar 79 FL

[Text] Jose Ramon Fernandez, member of the PCC Central Committee and vice president of the Council of Ministers, today received Dr (Gustavo Marek), director of UNESCO's science and technology regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean. (Marek), who is visiting our country for the first time, has visited various research and educational centers and has held talks with several Cuban leaders in that sphere of activity.

BAHAMAS

PINDLING OFFICIALLY OPENS ACP-EEC CONFERENCE

FL221914 Nassau Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 22 Mar 79 FL

[Excerpt] Mr Pindling is spending his birthday in Grand Bahama, where the Council of Ministers of the African, Caribbean and Pacific [ACP] states and delegates of the nine-member European Economic Community [EEC] are now meeting primarily to conclude a successor agreement to the Lome Convention, which provides for trade and economic cooperation between the two groups of states. The official opening address of the formal session was given about an hour ago by Prime Minister Pindling. Mr Pindling talked about the paramount concerns of the Lome Convention.

[Begin Pindling recording] The paramount common concerns to African, Caribbean and Pacific nations were a need for: 1) More attractive economic environment for their family of products; 2) A larger share of the economic pie, and technological participation in the processing and refinement of their family of products; and 3) The transfer of technologies so that they could begin to bridge the knowledge gap between themselves and the industrial international community. When the Convention of Lome was signed in 1975, all of the high contracting parties resolved to intensify their efforts together for the economic development and the social progress of the African, Caribbean and Pacific states. The signatories also resolved to promote, with regard to their respective levels of development, trade and cooperation between the ACP states and the Community, and to provide a sound basis therefor in conformity with their international obligations. Finally, all parties resolved to establish a new model for relations between developed and developing states, compatible with the aspirations of the international community toward a more just and more balanced economic order.

Today, in 1979, the basic issues are still outstanding, and in the intervening years have become more entwined with the need to stabilize commodities and prices, indeed the need for a whole new international economic order. The gravity of those issues has been compounded by the enforced reordering of priorities as illustrated by the impact of energy on the national economies of African, Caribbean and Pacific states. [end recording]

BERMUDA

BERMUDA WORKERS' SOCIALIST PARTY ESTABLISHED

FL221755 Kingston DAILY GLEANER in English 20 Mar 79 p 3 FL

[Text] Hamilton, March 16, (CANA)--A third political party, dedicated to "representing the working people of the island regardless of race, religion or membership of any union," has been formed in Bermuda. The Bermuda Workers' Socialist Party (BWSP) has been launched by two former members of the opposition Progressive Labour Party (PLP). Other founders have so far not been identified.

Officials of the ruling United Bermuda Party and the PLP have been reluctant to comment on the new party, but one PLP branch chairman said: "It is a lot of bull."

In a press release signed by BWSP General Secretary Eugene Durham and party organiser Glenn Fubler, the fledgling group said representation for workers was vital during this time of "uncontrolled price rises and wage restriction." Fubler, a teacher, said the task of the new party was to "channel the spirit of socialism into a grass roots movement of working people in order to deal with Bermuda's many social problems stemming from a history of injustice."

GRENADA

MAURICE BISHOP ANNOUNCES FULL PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

FL221625 Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 17 Mar 79 p 1 FL

[GUARDIAN staffer Erroll Pilgrim reporting from Grenada]

[Excerpt] Saint Georges, Fri: Two businessmen, a businesswoman, a planter and a private practitioner are among a 14-member provisional government that has been set up to administer the affairs of Grenada. The government is headed by lawyer Maurice Bishop, former opposition leader and head of the New Jewel Movement, which staged Tuesday's successful overthrow of the government of Sir Eric Gairy.

According to an announcement, the first task of the new government would be to prepare for new elections as soon as possible.

The full provisional government is as follows: Maurice Bishop; Bernard Coard, former New Jewel Movement member of Parliament; Unison Whiteman, an ex-teacher; Hudson Austin, an ex-prison officer; Dr Bernard Gittens, private practitioner; Pamela Buxo, inn keeper; Lynden Ramdhann, businessman; Norris Bain, businessman and MP with the former government; Sydney Ambrose, planter; Lloyd Noel, candidate in the last election and a lawyer; Kendrick Radix, a senator; Selwyn Stratchan, a candidate in the last election; George Louison, public relations officer of NJM; and Vincent Noel, president of the bank and general workers union of Grenada.

Mr Bishop announced the team at a press conference today at Studio Two of Radio Free Grenada, now command headquarters of the new revolutionary government.

RADIX DESIGNATED U.S., UN AMBASSADOR

FL221630 Port-of-Spain SUNDAY GUARDIAN in English 18 Mar 79 p 1 FL

[Text] Saint Georges, Sat: The new revolutionary government in Grenada today named its first diplomatic representative. He is Mr Kendrick Radix, who will be ambassador to the United States and the United Nations.

The appointment of the Grenadian lawyer, who is already in the United States seeking support for the new administration, was announced over Radio Free Grenada this morning. However, there may be some time before Mr Radix can become officially effective, because the new administration which seized power in a coup last Tuesday is yet to be recognised by a foreign country. The man who represented Grenada at the UN and in Washington prior to Tuesday's overthrow is Mr George Griffith, who is at present in North America. Kendrick Radix is a Bureau member of the New Jewel Movement, the opposition party which overthrew the Gairy government. (CANA)

DETAILS OF ATTEMPT TO CONSTITUTIONALIZE COUP

FL221655 Port-of-Spain SUNDAY GUARDIAN in English 18 Mar 79 p 1 FL

[Text] Saint Georges, Sat:--A Caribbean plan for constitutionalising the Grenada coup aborted this week and is not to be pursued, according to the island's revolutionary Prime Minister Maurice Bishop.

Mr Bishop, responding to a CANA query, gave some details of the plan put to him from a Caribbean Community foreign ministers' meeting in Barbados on Wednesday and Thursday. It collapsed because of difficultues created by officials of the government which was thrown out of office last Tuesday by force of arms.

Mr Bishop's New Jewel Movement (NJM) planned and executed the pre-dawn up-rising, which the new regime said took three lives and did only minor damage to property.

On Thursday he sent NJM public relations officer George Louison as an emissary to the foreign ministers' meeting, with several assurances and to seek recognition from Grenada's fellow CARICOM states.

Mr Bishop explained the formula in part and his administration's attitude. He said his concern was to help get the situation back to normal within the framework of the constitution.

The proposal was put to Deputy Prime Minister (of the Gairy government) Herbert Preudhomme to revoke the appointment of Senator Derek Knight as minister without portfolio. Having done so, Mr Preudomme was to resign as acting prime minister (Sir Eric Gairy left the island last Monday for New York), and Governor General Sir Paul Scoon would then appoint Mr Bishop to act as prime minister. Such would have been done under Section 61 of the constitution which says: "In his own deliberate judgment, his excellency can so make appointments if it is impracticable to consult with the prime minister."

There were some pitfalls in such an approach, said Mr Bishop. "The majority in Parliament would still outmumber, and in theory all the governor general can do on that constitutional provision is to appoint an acting prime minister. Yet in the interest of a solution to ensure the continued peaceful situation, we decided to make the proposals to Mr Preudhomme."

Mr Bishop said Mr Preudhomme and Finance Minister George Hosten then made several demands, "despite the urgings of the ministers attending the conference in Barbados. They were urged by telephone to accept the reality that the new government was in full and effective control and that any option they got was an option they should accept."

Mr Bishop said the two Cabinet members demanded the right to have three lawyers other than government lawyers, who, they said, could no longer be trusted. Another demand was that the signing of the agreement be witnessed by representatives of the United States, Britain, and Canada, and should take place at Government House in the presence of the governor general.

Mr Bishop declared that so far the attempt at settling the matter in that manner had failed, and "that particular option" would not be pursued again.--(CANA)

MEXICO

MEXICO CITY SHAKEN BY ANOTHER STRONG QUAKE

PA222144 Paris AFP in Spanish 1417 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Mexico City, 22 Mar (AFP)--The Meteorological Institute has reported that a quake registering 5 on the Richter scale occurred today without claiming any victims or causing material damage. The epicenter was located 370 km southwest of Mexico City. This is the third strong quake that has occurred in the country. The strongest one hit on Wednesday of last week, registering 7 on the Richter scale, and destroyed a considerable number of buildings and claimed 5 victims in Mexico City.

PEMEX DIRECTOR SAYS NO IMMEDIATE INCREASE IN OIL PRICES

PA221647 Mexico City International Service in Spanish 0400 GMT 22 Mar 79 PA

[Text] Mexican Petroleum [PEMEX] Director Jorge Diaz Serrano said in Oaxaca that the prices of gasoline, gas and diesel for (?international) consumption will not be increased. [Words indistinct] that Mexico does not have enough exploration capacity to meet its oil sale commitments. We have not had, Diaz Serrano said, any complaints from our clients. I cannot understand those charges. Diaz Serrano said that Mexico is meeting its commitments and added that the clients are satisfied. Regarding the United States, he said that there have been no official talks with that country for sales of gas and parallel sales of oil.

Regarding the opinions expressed by certain U.S. congressmen (?about) PEMEX, Diaz Serrano said: That is a strictly U.S. viewpoint, and we have nothing to say on the subject. He said that if the United States wants to purchase fuel from us, then there will be talks and the prices will be established.

Asked whether Mexico would raise prices (?in line with) international market prices, Diaz Serrano said that for the moment we are not interested in establishing a policy of speculation with respect to the international price of oil.

Diaz Serrano was interviewed this afternoon following a ceremony honoring Benito Juarez at which President Lopez-Portillo presided.

PERU

ASSEMBLY PROTESTS ARREST OF REPRESENTATIVE

PA221431 Paris AFP in Spanish 0414 GMT 21 Mar 79 PA

[Excerpts] Lima, 20 Mar (AFP)--The Peruvian Constituent Assembly approved a motion tonight protesting the arrest and mistreatment of Representative Victor Cuadros and expressed its decision to defend parliamentary immunity. After a vigorous debate, the motion was approved with favorable votes from the majority parties--the Aprist Party led by Victor Raul Haya de la Torre and the rightist Popular Christian Party. It was approved over another motion submitted by the leftist faction. The leftist motion also called for censuring the political-military chief of the area and demanded that he be sanctioned, stating that the chief, a brigadier general, has violated existing provisions. In addition, the assembly approved an agreement which states that there are no grounds for filing charges against Cuadros, who has been granted full freedom.